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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/730,607	12/08/2003	Timothy S. Fanning	3573-1000.2	4019

7590 04/19/2006

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EXAMINER

HENDERSON, MARK T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3722

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/730,607

Applicant(s)

FANNING ET AL.

Examiner

Mark T. Henderson

Art Unit

3722

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED OFFICE ACTION

Faxing of Responses to Office Actions

In order to reduce pendency and avoid potential delays, TC 3700 is encouraging FAXing or responses to Office Actions directly into the Group at (571) 273-8300. This practice may be used for filing papers, which require a fee by applicants who authorize charges to a PTO deposit account. Please identify the examiner and art unit at the top of your cover sheet. Papers submitted via FAX into TC 3700 will be promptly forwarded to the examiner.

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement filed December 8, 2003 fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1), which requires the following: (1) a list of all patents, publications, applications, or other information submitted for consideration by the Office; (2) U.S. patents and U.S. patent application publications listed in a section separately from citations of other documents; (3) the application number of the application in which the information disclosure statement is being submitted on each page of the list; (4) a column that provides a blank space next to each document to be considered, for the examiner's initials; and (5) a heading that clearly indicates that the list is an information disclosure statement. The information disclosure statement has

been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered. Furthermore, the information disclosure statement fails to comply with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(3) because it does not include a concise explanation of the relevance, as it is presently understood by the individual designated in 37 CFR 1.56(c) most knowledgeable about the content of the information. The examiner submits that the “FFR Yellow pages Catalog” needs a listed publication date, as well as the relevant pages which pertains to applicant’s invention. It has been placed in the application file, but the information referred to therein has not been considered.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the “right to exclude” granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

2. Claims 1-17 are rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 14 of U.S. Patent No. 6,666,609 (Fanning) in view of Wedge (2,325,155). Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because disclose a holder comprising: a panel, a ring system, a plurality of hingedly connected leaves, a ring having two halves, and a locking device that locks when administered with a rotational force and traverses in a direction perpendicular to the face of the panel and can press against the leaves and secure the leaves from moving in order to lock the ring.

However, Fanning does not disclose: an area that is larger than the aperture of the cover so that the locking device is not removable from the aperture of the cover; a three ring binder.

Wedge discloses in Fig. 1-4, a locking device (23) having an lip area (23A, top head) that is larger (in diameter) than the aperture diameter (12) of the cover (14); wherein the majority of the locking device does not extend above the cover when locked; wherein the binder is a three ring binder; and wherein when the rings are closed, form a predetermined angle so that the leaves are substantially parallel (Fig. 2 and 4) and prevent leaves from rotating toward cover to open the ring halves.; and a tool that corresponds to the shaped aperture in the head of the cylinder.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Fanning's holder with a locking device having an area larger

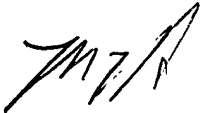
than the aperture of the cover as taught by Wedge as a means in which to hold the locking device onto the cover.

In regards to Claim 6 and 12, It would have been an obvious matter of design choice to make the shaped aperture of the locking mechanism of whatever form or shape was desired or expedient. A change in form or shape is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art, absent any showing of unexpected results. Therefore, it would have been obvious to make the shaped aperture of the locking mechanism of whatever shape or form as desired, since applicant has not disclosed the criticality of having a particular shape, and invention would function equally as well with any shape such as a cross shaped aperture for a Phillips screw driver.

Art Unit: 3722

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark T. Henderson whose telephone number is (571) 272-4477, and informal fax number is (571) 273-4477. The examiner can be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00AM to 3:45PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner Supervisor, Boyer Ashley, can be reached at (571) 272-4502. The formal fax number for TC 3700 is (571) 273-8300.



MTH

April 14, 2006



**BOYER D. ASHLEY
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**